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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for classifying vertically partitioned data comprising:
categorizing subsets of classifiers for the partitioned data;
determining class labels for a data pattern of the partitioned data for which the subsets of classifiers are consistent;
estimating posterior probabilities for the class labels of consistent classifier subsets;
approximating the overall posterior probability of the partitioned data based upon the estimated posterior probabilities of the consistent classifier subsets; ~~and~~
determining the mutual consistency of each classifier with respect to the other classifiers in a classifier subset;
producing a combined classification based upon said overall posterior probability; and
outputting said combined classification to classify said vertically partitioned data.
2. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, further comprising using a predetermined consistency condition for a classifier with respect to other classifiers.
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, wherein the posterior probability is approximated from the estimated posterior probabilities using a Bayesian framework.
5. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, wherein the class label is selected for test data for which a combined posterior probability is maximum.

6. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer-readable medium storing instructions executable by a computer for classifying partitioned data in a method comprising computer software recorded on a computer-readable medium for performing:
categorizing subsets of classifiers for the partitioned data;
determining class labels for a data pattern of the partitioned data for which the subsets of classifiers are consistent;
estimating posterior probabilities for the class labels of consistent classifier subsets;
approximating the overall posterior probability of the partitioned data based upon the estimated posterior probabilities of the consistent classifier subsets; and
determining the mutual consistency of each classifier with respect to the other classifiers in a classifier subset;
producing a combined classification based upon said overall posterior probability; and
outputting said combined classification to classify said vertically partitioned data.

7. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising a computer-readable medium storing computer software code means instructions executable by a computer for classifying partitioned data comprising computer software recorded on a computer-readable medium for said computer system comprising:
computer software code means for categorizing subsets of classifiers for the partitioned data;
computer software code means for determining class labels for a data pattern of the partitioned data for which the classifier subsets are consistent;
computer software code means for estimating posterior probabilities for the class labels of consistent classifier subsets;
computer software code means for approximating the overall posterior probability of the partitioned data based upon the estimated posterior probabilities of the consistent classifier subsets; and
computer software code means for determining the mutual consistency of each classifier with respect to the other classifiers in a classifier subset;

computer software code means for producing a combined classification based upon said overall posterior probability; and

computer software code means for outputting said combined classification to classify said vertically partitioned data.

8. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 6, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, further comprising using a predetermined consistency condition for a classifier with respect to other classifiers.

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 6, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, wherein the posterior probability is approximated from the estimated posterior probabilities using a Bayesian framework.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 6, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, wherein the class label is selected for test data for which a combined posterior probability is maximum.

12. (Currently Amended) The computer system as claimed in claim 7, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, further comprising computer software code means for using a predetermined consistency condition for a classifier with respect to other classifiers.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) The computer system as claimed in claim 7, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference~~, wherein the posterior probability is approximated from the estimated posterior probabilities using a Bayesian framework.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer system as claimed in claim 7, ~~all the limitations of which are incorporated herein by reference,~~ wherein the class label is selected for test data for which a combined posterior probability is maximum.